



NEWS RELEASE

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CONNER ANNOUNCES AVAILABILITY OF OVER \$6.2 MILLION FOR RURAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

WASHINGTON, – Agriculture Deputy Secretary Chuck Conner today announced the availability of more than \$6.2 million in grant funds through the Rural Community Development Initiative Program (RCDI). The RCDI program provides technical assistance and training funds to qualified intermediary organizations to develop their capacity to undertake housing, community facilities, and community and economic development projects in rural areas.

“The projects funded through this program promote economic investments and job development in our rural communities,” said Conner. “The community buildings, housing and improvement projects these funds will help finance are providing additional economic opportunities and improving the quality of life of rural America.”

The \$6,286,500 in RCDI grant funds are available to intermediaries and have a dollar for dollar matching fund requirement, intended to double the impact of the grants. Qualified organizations can be public or private (including tribal organizations) that have been legally organized for at least three years and have experience working with eligible recipients. Recipients of the funds from the intermediary can be non-profit organizations, low-income communities, or federally recognized tribes.

Complete information about the program is available in the July 12th, 2006 edition of the Federal Register or by going to: <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/rhs/rcdi/>. Information is also available from the Colorado USDA Rural Development state office, (720) 544-2931. Applications must be received by Rural Development within 90 days of the Federal Register publication date. Late applications will not be considered for funding.

USDA Rural Development's mission is to increase economic opportunity and improve the quality of life in rural communities. As a venture capital entity, Rural Development has invested over \$63 billion since the beginning of the Bush Administration to provide equity and technical assistance to finance and foster growth in homeownership, business development, and critical community and technology infrastructure. Over 1.1 million jobs have been created or saved through these investments. Further information on rural programs is available at a local USDA Rural Development office or by visiting USDA's web site at <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov>.

